

RACIAL REGIMES AND WHITE EUROPEAN JEWISH SUPREMACY AS PROPERTY

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ABSTRACT

This article argues that the Zionist theft and expropriation of Palestinian land resulted in it being made into white property and that Zionism can be understood as a textbook case of Cedric Robinson's concept of racial regimes that explains how race is reproduced even though race is denied by the Zionist colonisers as justifying the relations of power. The article follows Cheryl Harris's and Noura Erakat's work on whiteness as property that, according to Erakat, leaves the Palestinian natives outside the category of Jewish nationals to be removed, dispossessed, and contained. The article illustrates how the ongoing colonisation of Palestine as expressing white European supremacy involves several aspects of racial capitalism—the Judaisation of Palestinian lands, the segmentation of labour from the Zionist policy of the Conquest of (Hebrew) Labour to the reliance on cheap and dispensable Palestinian labour, and the *lebensraum* plans to relocate the Gaza Strip population and re-settle it.²

KEYWORDS: Racial regime, whiteness as property, European white (Jewish) supremacy, resettlement

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Introduction

In January 2024, three months after the launch of the Gaza genocide, extreme right-wing Israeli politicians, including cabinet ministers, held a conference titled 'Jewish settlement in Gaza'. The participants were shown a map of planned Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip (Yalon, 2024) in the spirit of *lebensraum*, or 'living space' — a critical component of the Nazi worldview that drove both its military conquests and racial policy (Holocaust Encyclopaedia n.d.). The conference followed the publication of several reports outlining Israel's intention to expel Gaza's Palestinian population and replace it with Jewish settlements. One report, published in late October 2023 by the Israeli Intelligence Ministry, stated that the option 'most strategically positive and long term for the state of Israel' for 'dealing with the Gaza Strip' after the Israeli defence Forces (IDF) occupies it is expelling Gaza's 2.3 million men, women, elderly, and children to Egypt (Avraham 2023). The report detailed plans for settling Gaza's Palestinian civilians in tent cities in Sinai before moving them to permanent housing in Egypt, and the means of doing so, which would entail substantial profit from demolition, transportation, construction, and armaments and security systems aimed at maintaining Israel's 'security control' over the Gaza Strip and its deported people, most of them Nakba refugees. The plans were considered 'a colossal crime against humanity', and demonstrate the workings of racial capitalism in the Zionist settler colonial project. A second report, by the Misgav Institute for National Security and Zionist Strategy, also published in October 2023, stated that the Hamas attack provided Israel with a 'unique and rare opportunity to evacuate the entire Gaza Strip', and proposed that Israel pays Egypt to house Gaza's former inhabitants in currently empty apartments near Cairo (Schwartz 2023). And just four months after launching its genocidal attack that led to tens of thousands deaths and injuries, destruction, starvation and homelessness, the IDF was constructing a buffer 'security' zone that winds around the Strip's boundary and tears a wide axis through its centre, encroaching on 32 per cent of Gaza (Al Jazeera 2024b), complete with fully equipped military bases, destroying all buildings within one kilometre and deemed by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights 'a possible war crime' (UN News 2024).

Concurring with Patrick Wolfe's claim (2006) that settler colonialism is motivated by a 'logic of elimination', this article proposes that Israel's permanent war against the Palestinians is not only about the racialisation and dehumanisation of the colonised Palestinians, but also about the acquisition and transfer of territory' from Native ownership (that) requires the mobilisation of technologies of violence together with the social relations that underpin their deployment' (Wolfe 2016, 15), as evidenced

by the Gaza resettlement plans. The article argues that the Zionist colonial project fits Cedric Robinson's theorisation of racial regimes as 'social systems in which race is proposed as a justification for the relations of power. While necessarily articulated with accruals of power, the covering conceit of a racial regime is a makeshift patchwork masquerading as memory and the immutable. Nevertheless, racial regimes do possess history' (Robinson 1983: xii). The concept of racial regime also relies, *inter alia*, on mythical narratives, which, in the case of Zionism, are Biblical narratives of land ownership.

While debated mostly with regards to South African apartheid and the anti-Apartheid struggle, racial capitalism, as argued by Kieron Turner in this volume, has not yet engendered similar debates in relation to the colonisation of Palestine, yet such an analysis is crucial. In this article I read the Zionist colonisation of Palestine through the lenses of Robinson's theory of racial regimes — crucial to understanding how racial capitalism is reproduced — and of Zionist European whiteness as property. After briefly exploring Robinson's theory of racial regimes (2017), I discuss George Lipsitz (1995) on the possessive investment in whiteness, and legal scholars Cheryl Harris (1993) on whiteness as property and Noura Erakat (2015) on white Jewishness as property. The Zionist colonisation of Palestine as expressing white European supremacy involved several aspects of racial capitalism from its very onset. These are first, the deliberate theft, purchase, racialisation and Judaisation of Palestinian lands and their resettlement by the Zionist movement since the late nineteenth century; second, the segmentation of labour, including the early twentieth century Zionist policy of the Conquest of (Hebrew) Labour, class divisions between Jewish and Palestinian labour and between European and non-European Arab-Jewish labour, and the reliance on cheap and dispensable Palestinian labour (Machover and Or 1969; Shafir 1989; Ben Dor Benite forthcoming); and third, Israel's incarceration system and its racial capitalist rewards.

Racial Regimes, Zionism, and White European Supremacy

According to Cedric Robinson (1983, 9) the development of world capitalism was influenced by the forces of racism and nationalism. Race did not come with the birth of capitalism, but rather predated capitalism, being internal to Europe and the practices of Christianity. Capitalism, according to Robinson, has racist foundations, and the 'native racisms' responsible for death on a massive scale, are evident globally (Myers 2021: 11). Robinson (1983, 26) writes that 'the tendency of European civilisation through capitalism was... not to homogenize but to differentiate — to exaggerate regional, subcultural, and dialectical

differences into 'racial' ones'. And differentiations, Ruth Wilson Gilmore (2002: 262) follows him in arguing, are at once the prerequisite and the consequence of racial dehumanisation, which has always characterised the Zionist-Israeli approach to the Palestinian other.

In *Forgeries of Memory and Meaning*, Robinson (2007, xii-xiii) defines racial regimes as 'constructed social systems in which race is proposed as a justification for the relations of power', and suggests that one of the characteristics of racial regimes is employing mythic discourses, leading to racial regimes being 'commonly masqueraded as natural orderings, inevitable creations of collective anxieties prompted by threatening encounters with difference'.

While Zionism's early ideologues employed patchwork race theories to justify the colonisation of Palestine, current Zionist apologists deny that race is the justification for the relations of power, positing instead 'inevitable' territorial war and 'self-defence' as justifications. Robinson conceives of racial regimes as 'actually contrivances, designed and delegated by interested cultural and social powers with the wherewithal sufficient to commission their imaginings, manufacture, and maintenance' (2007, xiii), and proposes that racial regimes tend to wear thin over time. In conjunction with Robinson's concept of racial regime, I also read Patrick Wolfe (2016) on 'regimes of race'. For Wolfe race — a process, not an ontology — is a practice, and as such involves not only doctrinal formulations, but also economic, political, moral, legal, institutional as well as mythic dimensions. Race is ever shifting in the balance between 'those with a will to colonise and those with a will to be free, severely racialised in relation to each other' (Wolfe 2016: 18), and racial regimes are 'ever-incomplete projects whereby colonisers repetitively seek to improve and maintain White supremacy' (Wolfe 2016: 19).

Robinson's proposal that one of the attributes of racial regimes that they employ mythic discourses, yet are commonly masqueraded as natural orderings, clarifies the fit between the workings of racial regimes and the Zionist project. To persuade its adherents of the justification of colonising Palestine, Zionism re-purposed re-invented Biblical myths of Jewish origins in historic Palestine. The alleged divine promise of the land to the Jews and Biblical tales of ancestors, prophets, judges, and kings, are some such Biblical myths claiming a link between modern times Jewish people, the ancient Hebrews and the territory of Palestine, a link disputed by several Jewish archaeologists and Biblical scholars (e.g., Finkelstein and Silberman 2002; Bin Nun n.d.).

For Robinson racialism is an internal European process. Likewise, Palestinian scholar Joseph Massad (2019) argues that European philologists invented the category 'Semitic' to describe the languages of the Eastern Mediterranean to distinguish them from Indo-European 'Aryan'

languages. This assigned European Jews, though most did not speak Hebrew, a 'semitic' racial category, claiming that they descended from the ancient Hebrews, a claim debunked, inter alia, by Israeli geneticist Raphael Falk (2006), and Israeli historian Shlomo Sand (2009). Just as European Christians employed their 'superior' race to justify colonialism, Zionism, as a new member of the colonial club, claimed European white superiority to justify the colonisation of Palestine. Thus, Zionist ideologue Max Nordau (1895) could posit the racial 'degeneration' of Eastern European Jews, inventing the muscular, masculine 'new Jew', an incarnation of the Biblical mythical Hebrews (Lentin 2018) who would morph into Israel's colonial warriors. In escaping from Europe, racialised 'new Jews' ironically became white, akin to European gentiles, their allegiance with Europe commensurate with European colonialism, as Europe's persecuted Jews became Palestine's white European colonists.

The Zionist racial regime's claim of mythical origins, and Zionist insistence on the superiority of European white Jews above the Arab natives of Palestine but also above Arab non-European Jews emanates from the overriding goal of regimes of race — Whiteness and White supremacy (Wolfe 2016). In his introduction to Ghassan Kanafani's *On Zionist Literature*, Steven Salaita (2002) writes: 'For Kanafani, Zionism was a supremacist inclination to seek power in the service of imperial domination and accumulation at the expense of rank-and-file Jews'. For Kanafani, superiority 'is premised upon contempt for other peoples by placing them in a second tier in a 'human hierarchy' (Kanafani 2002: 60) — the prerequisites of racial dehumanisation.

Zionists mythologised European Jews as both descendants of ancient Hebrews and as European to the core, despite being racialised for centuries by Christian Europe as coming from outside Europe, a claim shared by Zionism and antisemitism (Wolfe 2016: 101). This meeting point between white supremacy and Jewish supremacy leads me to theorise Zionism as a *Jewish* variant of white European supremacy. Declarations of Jewish superiority over Palestinian Arabs abound, including during the Gaza genocide, Israel's Defence Minister Yoav Gallant calling the Gazans 'human animals' (*Al Jazeera* 2023).

European White Jewishness as Property

Like other colonial racial regimes, as theorised by both Robinson and Wolfe, Zionism was always about imperial accumulation. Owning property, Myers (2022) argues after Robinson, is a key component of whiteness; you become white by acquiring property that 'becomes the lens through which significations of race emerge'. This goes for state, public, and private property ownership. European civilisation, Myers adds, is

ultimately about whiteness, which in turn is about property. In the context of colonial dispossession, according to Robert Nichols (2017), property is generated under conditions that require divestment and alienation from those who appear, retroactively, as its original owners.

According to George Lipsitz (1995), whiteness emerged as a category in US life because of realities created by slavery, segregation, immigration restrictions, Indian policy, conquest, and colonialism. The fictive identity of 'whiteness' appeared in law and everyday life as people who arrived as racialised Europeans became something called 'whites' when they got to North America, where, from the very start, they established legal structures encouraging possessive investment in whiteness that authorised the appropriation of Native American lands.

Linking racial identity and property, legal scholar Cheryl Harris (1993) examines how whiteness evolved into property, protected in US law. Harris argues that 'the system of chattel slavery was premised upon the appropriation of indigenous lands, pointing to the deployment of different racial logics in the treatment of black slaves as objects of property and indigenous nations as lacking the cultural practices of white Europeans that defined them as inferior, and consequently as non-owners of their land' (Bhandar 2018: 6). Whiteness became the basis of racialised privilege, and it shares critical characteristics with property such as the right to use and enjoy, reputational value, and the power to exclude. Lipsitz and Harris focus on the US where, even though legal segregation was overturned, whiteness as property continues to act as barrier as racial classification protects entrenched power.

Brenna Bhandar employs Robinson's concept of racial regimes to include property, coining the term 'racial regimes of property' whereby the appropriation of indigenous lands is justified by the reliance on possession, use, and the abstract proof of ownership in the form of registered title. Both race and property are historically contingent rather than natural, and are produced by complex interrelations between capital, science, and culture (Bhandar 2018: 16). In the case of Bedouin Palestinians, Israel 'relied on the absence of registered title along with an ideology of improvement that privileges European forms of cultivation as proof of ownership, along with continual attempts to physically remove Bedouin who are in occupation of their own land' (Bhandar 2018: 10). Bhandar proposes that the Israeli colonisation of Palestine presents an exemplary example of the fragmented nature of the racial regimes of ownership that typify the settler colony.

Palestinian legal scholar Noura Erakat (2015) builds on Harris's work on whiteness as tangible property through three elements — the violence of liberal democracies, the codification of race, and the necessity of a racialised putative 'other' that can be easily identified, defined, and

captured in legal categories. Erakat posits white *Jewishness* as property, though without fully clarifying what is Jewish about it beyond interpreting the value of 'Jewish nationality' and its differentiation as white supremacy that informs Israel's legal system, inherited from the Ottoman and British imperial legislatures. Israel's relations with Palestinians not only led — through instituting a strict racial regime and enacting a series of property laws — to their deprivation, but it also imbued 'Jewish nationality' with actual material value. White European Jewishness as property was legislated for in a series of laws since the 1950s, giving Jewish people material, economic and political property rights in comparison with the native Palestinians (Eghabariah 2021), and granting white Euro-Ashkenazi Jews property rights over both Palestinians and non-European non-white Jews (see Abdo in this volume).

These laws include: The Law of Return (1950) that allows every Jewish person, including children and grandchildren of Jews and their spouses, to settle in Israel and automatically become a citizen (Adalah 2024a); The Citizenship Law (1952) that allows for the revocation of citizenship without a criminal conviction (Adalah 2024b); The Absentees' Property Law (1952) that enabled the state via the Custodian of Absentees' Property to take charge of movable and immovable property (land, houses, bank accounts, material and cultural effects) belonging to Palestinians 'who were expelled, fled, or who left the country after 29 November 1947, mainly due to the war'. The Absentees' Property Law enabled Israel to take possession of lands belonging to internal and external Palestinian refugees (Adalah 2024c); The Jewish National Fund Law (1953) that charges the JNF, the Zionist land purchasing agency, with purchasing and administering public land which became state land and bars its selling to 'non-Jews' (Palestinians) (Adalah 2024d; on 'state lands' see Abdo and Ayyash in this volume); The Admissions Committees Law (2011) that gives 'admissions committees' discretion to screen applicants seeking to purchase houses and plots of land in 'community towns' built on state land on the basis of racist criteria, which means the exclusion of Palestinians from Jewish 'community towns' (Adalah 2023a); The Settlement Regularisation Law (2017) that allows Israel to retroactively expropriate private Palestinian lands in the occupied West Bank (Adalah 2023b); and finally, the Nation State Law (2018) that guarantees the ethnic-religious character of Israel as exclusively Jewish, entrenching the privileges enjoyed by Jewish citizens, while anchoring discrimination against Palestinian citizens and legitimising exclusion, racism, and systemic inequality. Section 7a of the law describes Israel's actions and policies since 1948: 'The state views the development of *Jewish* settlement as a national value and will act to encourage and promote its establishment and consolidation' (Adalah 2020, emphasis added).

Erakat (2015, 83–40) writes that White European Jewishness as property meant that Palestinians were beyond the legal category of Jewish national and had to be removed, dispossessed and/or contained. The European founders of the state both reified European supremacy and ascribed new value to Jewish nationality relative to the Arab other. Israel consecrated the value of the Jewish-inflected laws listed above that serve as a gateway to basic services, land, housing, education, and employment. In the case of the Bedouin who remained in the state of Israel after 1948 — most having been expelled to Gaza or Jordan — many were concentrated in a restricted 1,500-square-kilometre area known as ‘*al-Siyaj*’ (‘fence’ in Arabic) located in the north eastern Naqab, the region’s least arable land. After the military governorate ended in 1966, Israel began their forced urbanisation (Abu Saad 2008; Nasasra 2017). Moreover, the laws mentioned above enabled forcing 15,000 Bedouin to reside in ‘unrecognised villages’ without electricity, water, refuse and waste disposal, roads, schools and health services (Lentin 2018: 51).

Whiteness as property bifurcated Israeli citizenship from Jewish nationality to privilege Jewish people within and beyond the State, granting them material, political and cultural rights over and above Palestinian citizens and occupied Palestinian subjects.

Some Aspects of White Jewishness as Property under Zionist Settler Colonialism

Land

Getting back to racial capitalism, the centrality of land fits its emphasis on dispossession, exploitation, and extraction (Robinson 1983). According to Wolfe (2016, 22), Eurocolonial powers arrived in Native country *ex nihilo* condensing power and expanding violence, and this pre-formedness, relatively resistant to local determinations, is colonialism’s preaccumulation, which is different from the Eurocentric Marxist historiography’s theorisation of primitive accumulation. Arriving in the colonies, capitalism already contained its own global preaccumulations, such as enslaving Africans in the Americas and stealing, purchasing, and depopulating value-added Native land in Palestine. It’s worth remembering that the Zionist project, upheld by the British Empire, is ‘part and parcel of what we might call project Europe: the Zionism on which (Israel) is founded is organic to and shaped by European imperialism’ (Wolfe 2016: 209). Insisting that Imperialism is not the latest stage of capitalism but its foundational warrant, Zionism, Wolfe writes, consciously avoided confinement to a single metropolis in favour of a ‘collective mother country’ (Robinson 1973: 76). The Zionists purchased

Native land in conformity with the law of the current imperial power, and racial subjectivity developed in relation to racial regimes of ownership.

Initially the Zionist project seemed not primarily driven by economic considerations of profit and resource exploitation. Many early Jewish settlers, mostly white Eastern Europeans (although there was a small contingent of Yemeni settlers, see Ben Dor Benite forthcoming), regarded themselves as Labour (socialist) Zionists, even though 'for most Labour Zionist leaders, 'socialism' was a rhetorical means of legitimating the national project of creating a Jewish state and little else' (Shulman 2003). Though the Zionist colonisation was not exceptional, in the case of Palestine, Wolfe (2016: 212) writes, the natives had already been incorporated into the Ottoman and British colonial empires, and this enabled settler conformity to domestic property laws, later incorporated into Israeli law. Wolfe calls the Zionist modus of colonisation 'purchase by another means', whereby the European Jewish funders of the Zionist project differed from speculators who financed colonial expansion in Australia and North America in not looking to return a profit, financing Zionist settlers to convert Palestinian lands from native ownership to irreversible European Jewish endowment. Importantly, Zionism's diffuse metropolis and Jewish land purchases in Palestine were linked in that the former financed the latter (Wolfe 2016: 211). This modus operandi, and the legal and organisational structures set up by the Zionist establishment and by the state of Israel enable the ongoing takeover of Palestinian lands within Israel's 1949 armistice borders and in the occupied Palestinian territory.

In 1901 the World Zionist Organization (WZO) founded the Jewish National Fund to ensure Jewish land ownership in Palestine (Wolfe 2016: 224). Zionist land purchasing strategies attached usufruct — the right to enjoy the use of another's property — to title, so that (Palestinian) vendors could sell rights that might not have been theirs to sell (Wolfe 2016, 231). The dual aim of the Zionist purchasing methods was 'to acquire the greatest amount of land with the smallest number of Palestinians and to concentrate the greatest number of Palestinians onto the smallest amount of land' (Erakat 2015: 85). The JNF green washes its racialised land purchases by having planted millions of trees, built dams and reservoirs, developed many acres of land and established parks and nature reserves. By 2007, The JNF owned 13 per cent of the total land in Israel (*About JNF* n.d.), 80 per cent of which is owned by the state and managed by the Israel Land Authority. Half of these lands are controlled by the Israel Defence Forces and the security services (Shiefer and Oren 2008), facilitating the ongoing demolition of Palestinian houses and villages, and the expulsion of Palestinian citizens from their lands (Boxerman 2022). Many JNF forests, where European conifers displaced native trees, were

planted over and used to cover the ruins of depopulated Palestinian villages, making the JNF a key technology of Zionist colonisation and racialisation. Crucially, the initial racialised Zionist land purchase practices were enabled, as Abdo argues in this volume, by imperial Ottoman and British taxation policies inherited by Israel, which forced Palestinian *Fallaheen* to sell and abandon their lands because they could not afford the high taxes. Later, Yinon Cohen and Neve Gordon (2018) write, the racialisation of space by the state of Israel took shape through first, *biospatial* strategies, including constructing space itself as a racialised category, and second, the continuing expropriation of Palestinian land from 1948 until today, through ongoing house and village demolitions and scant building permits to Israel's Palestinian citizens and occupied subjects. As most land in Israel is either state- or JNF-owned, a major effect of racial capitalism on Jewish property and Palestinian deprivation prohibiting Palestinian citizens and occupied subjects to purchase and lease land (Safian 1997).

Beyond the material expropriation of Palestinian lands, villages, towns, and urban neighbourhoods, the 1948 Nakba also brought about the attempted erasure of Palestinian society and culture. One aspect is what Israeli historian Ilan Pappé (2006: 226) calls 'the memoricide of the Nakba' that led to establishing the Naming Committee tasked with Hebraising Palestine's geography, giving Palestinian places Hebrew names, so as to whiten and de-Arabise Palestine's terrain and erase its history.

Labour

As well as the Jewish National Fund, the WZO also established the Conquest of (Hebrew) Labour policy, in line with the creation of racialised white European 'new Jews', who would differ from their diasporic antecedents and the Palestinian Natives, but also from non-European, non-white Arab and North African Jews (Shafir 1989; Lentin 2018).

The Conquest of Labour campaign underpinned core Zionist institutions such as the communal agriculture-based *kibbutz*, and the labour trade union *Histadrut*, an insulated Jewish-only entity that conducted its affairs as if no Palestinians were around (Wolfe 2016: 225). Like the dispossession of Palestinian lands, the Conquest of Labour policy was central to the colonisation of Palestine and sought to actively dispossess Palestinians of their economic relevance, and to prevent Zionist dependency on Palestinian labour. In addition, as Abdo argues in this volume, the Zionist colonisation deprived Palestinian *Fellaheen* of their agricultural product-based industries such as olives and olive oil products, and Yafa oranges, which Zionist manufacturers took over.

Gershon Shafir analyses the Zionist project as based on a 'split labour market' that hurled together, through settlement and incorporation,

distinct labour forces, enabling white European Jewish workers to block the labour market to cheaper Palestinian workers. This strategy was later supplemented by the importation of cheap non-European Arab Jewish labour (racialised as 'oriental' or Mizrahi Jews) that European labour Zionists imported reluctantly in order not to have to rely on Palestinian workers (Ben Dor Benite, forthcoming). When that failed, the Conquest of Labour turned into the conquest of territory, financed by world Jewish capital (Abdo and Yuval-Davis 1995: 294).

Analysing the Israeli class structure, Moshe Machover and Akiva Or (1969 [2002]) argue that the Israeli Jewish labour market can only be understood in the context of the Zionist colonisation of Palestine. Israeli Jewish workers were all settler-colonisers, who put their national loyalties before their class loyalties. Importantly, however, because large numbers of the working class were non-European Arab and African Jewish settlers, when they did express discontent, it was not directed against their conditions as proletarians but rather against their racialisation as 'orientals' (Mizrahim) by white European Jews. Instead of upskilling non-European Jewish workers so as to fill unskilled and semi-skilled labour market positions — many Arab Jews started life in Israel in transit camps and were directed to vocational rather than academic schooling— Zionist capitalism, choosing to maintain prevailing class divisions, which were based on European white supremacy, preferred to import white Jewish workers from Europe and North America, because a significant upward movement of 'oriental' Jews might create a vacuum that could only be filled by Palestinian labour. When Machover and Or published their analysis, 'oriental' Jewish workers in colonial Israeli society would be considered the equivalent to of the US 'poor whites'. Since then, the Zionist racial regime has succeeded in co-opting non-European Arab Jews into the colonisation project, and class differences no longer match racial distinctions between white European and non-European- non-white Jews. Although, as sociologist Guy Abutbul-Selinger points out, Mizrahi identity in Israel has become dominant (Littman 2023), it does not mean that white European Jewish supremacy has disappeared or relinquished its hold on colonised property.

The 1967 occupation of Palestinian territory in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip required a much larger labour force and resulted in the influx of tens of thousands Palestinian workers into the Israeli labour market, increasing the Israeli economic reliance on cheap and dispensable Palestinian labour. However, the occupation introduced a complex bureaucratic permit regime (Berda 2017) and Israel imported a large migrant labour force to replace Palestinian workers, creating a host of legal and semi-legal racialised complexities (Kemp and Rajman 2008).

Israel's prison industrial complex

Haidar Eid and Andy Clarno (2017) argue that neoliberal apartheid regimes like Israel depend on advanced strategies of securitisation to maintain their power. Israel exercises sovereignty over the Occupied Palestinian Territory through military deployments, electronic surveillance, imprisonment, interrogations, and torture. The Israeli racial colony has also produced a fragmented geography of isolated Palestinian enclosures surrounded by walls and checkpoints and managed through closures, permits, and segregated roads. Israeli companies take the lead in lucratively and globally marketing weapons and security systems, by developing and 'battle-testing' arms and high-tech devices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the Gaza Strip (Halper 2015; Loewenstein 2023; Turner forthcoming). Israel also operates racialised policing strategies in conjunction with imperial regimes, mainly the US.

The link made by Ruth Wilson Gilmore (2002) between the prison industrial complex and racial capitalism is relevant to theorising the Zionist justice and carceral systems according to which Palestinians and Israelis are judged and incarcerated in separate legal and prison systems as another aspect of racial capitalism. Racism, Gilmore argues, means 'organized abandonment' by both state and capitalism, working together to raise racial barriers that create group-differentiated vulnerabilities. The term 'prison industrial complex' explains the relationships involved in imprisoning large numbers of people by providing buildings, goods and services that benefit large sectors of society engaged by the security and prison industries.

Since 1948 Israel has imprisoned hundreds of thousands Palestinians and since 1967 more than 800,000 Palestinians from the occupied territory have been illegally imprisoned inside Israel (Adameer 2016). In 2023 a total of 4,900 Palestinians were imprisoned (Adameer 2023), and since 7 October 2023, more than 4,000 Palestinians have been arrested and at least 15 prisoners from the West Bank and 27 prisoners from Gaza died while in Israeli custody (*Al Jazeera* 2024a; *The New Arab* 2024). Since 1967 Israel has operated two separate legal systems in the occupied West Bank, with Israeli settlers subject to Israel's civilian legal system while Palestinians live under military law.

Crucially, economic exploitation is key to entrenching Israel's military occupation and administering its colonial regime to control, exploit and quell rebellion. Palestinians are made to finance the cost of their subjugation by paying the occupiers to demolish their homes or have an executed relative's body returned for burial, and by paying the heavy fines imposed by the military courts on Palestinian prisoners. In 2016 alone, fines averaged half a million shekels (\$145,000) per prisoner (Euro-

Med Human Rights Monitor 2017). Thus Israel's colonial judicial system is a central building block in the systematic racialisation and economic exploitation of the Palestinians.

Conclusion

Cohen and Gordon's (2018) 'Israel's Bio-Spatial Politics' focuses on the Judaisation of space in both 'good Israel' (the 1949 Armistice borders Israeli state) and 'bad Israel' (colonised Palestine), but does not theorise race as 'a technology for the management of human difference, the main goal of which is the production, reproduction and maintenance of white supremacy' (Lentin 2020, 5). Focusing on demographic and 'security' justifications for the spatial segregation between 'Jews' and 'Palestinians', they do not theorise racial capitalism as a suitable framework for highlighting the concerns of Indigenous peoples under settler colonialism, the centrality of land fitting the emphasis in racial capitalism on dispossession, exploitation and extraction (Robinson 1983). This article uses land, labour and the carceral system as some of examples of the workings of racial capitalism in the racial regime that is Zionism.

As Robinson and Wolfe argue, separately, racial regimes require high maintenance and refurbishment. The Zionist racial regime is no different, which is why Zionist agents have always worked tirelessly to construct Jewish, non-Jewish, and Israeli adherents as loyal Zionist subjects. Zionist indoctrination begins at infancy, continues through the education system and military service, and is present in media, culture, political discourses, and daily life, insisting that trainees believe in God's promise of 'the land' to the 'Jewish people', the only one deserving it. The Zionist racial-colonial regime enlists Jewish religious myths, making Jewish racial supremacy and racial discrimination foundational to the definition of Israel as a Jewish state that grants Jews exclusive land and property rights, denied to Palestinians (Shahak 1994). The Zionist racial regime keeps reminding trainees of the European, civilised nature of the Zionist project. As argued by Israel's president Isaac Herzog on CNN in December 2023, two months into the Gaza genocide, the Gaza 'war' is not between Israel and Hamas but is rather intended to 'save Western civilisation' (cited in Lentin 2024). White Europeans treated Jewish people as useful both economically and in maintaining white supremacy and 'Western civilisation'. Likewise, Zionism's white European Jewish supremacy treats non-European Jews both as useful cheap labour and as partners in the colonisation of Palestine.

Alana Lentin (2024) reminds us of Robinson's emphasis on the interrelationship between race, *Herrenvolk* ideology and nationalism, which 'helps explain both the expression of Zionism as a branch of European racial-colonialism and the succour it gives to European

ethnonationalism which looks to Israel for inspiration in a move of perverse reversal'. Focusing on white Jewish supremacy as distinct from white supremacy tout court may be a step too far, particularly as such arguments are used by Zionist apologists to insist that all Palestine solidarity activists are ultimately motivated by antisemitism. But I do want to insist that just as Zionist settler colonialism has several unique features distinguishing it from other settler colonial projects, so the adherence to Jewishness as not only colonial and capitalist, but also historically rooted within the nationalist racialism of Zionism allows us to speak of white European Jewishness as both supremacy and property, as argued in this article.

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